(e) if so, what are the details thereof stating, the steps contemplated by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M. G. K. MENON): (a) The Statutes of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) provide for regular recruitment on the recommendations of Statutory Selection Committees, special appointments by invitation and on deputation, and appointments for fixed tenures. In the initial stages, prior to the constitution of the Board of Management and the Statutory Selection Committees, the University selected a few senior persons for appointment on deputation and on tenure to make the University operational. Consultants were also appointed to assist the University during this period. In response to advertisements issued by IGNOU some of these persons subsequently applied for regular posts in the University. Six persons, who had earlier worked in IGNOU on deputation, etc,. were appointed on a regular basis on the recommendations of Statutory Selection Committees.

Initially Regional Directors of IGNOU were appointed on deputation on the recommendations of the State Governments/Universities which provided the physical facilities for Regional Centres. These appointments were made on the basis of the qualifications and experience prescribed by the University. When the University advertised the posts of Regional Directors in 1988, some of the persons working on deputation also applied. Nine of the deputationists and six external candidates were appointed as Regional Directors on a regular basis on the recommendations of the Statutory Selection Committee.

Most of the incumbents of senior positions in IGNOU have not worked in the University earlier.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Though the Act of the University came into force on 20th September, 1985, the Board of Management, the Planning Board and the Selection Committees were constituted only in December, 1986. As a result of the preparatory work done during the year 1986, the University was able to launch two pilot programmes in early 1987. After recruitment of regular staff, the University has introduced the Bachelor's Degree in Arts and Commerce and a few Diploma and Certificate programmes. As courses in Science, Engineering and Computers require adequate facilities for laboratories and workshop which IGNOU does not have, these courses have not been started. The Bachelor's degree programme in Science and Certificate course in Computers are scheduled to be launched in 1990.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Missing Art Objects in National Museum, Delhi

71. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of art objects found missing/stolen from the National Museum, Delhi during 1987, 1988 and 1989;

(b) what is the nature and estimated value of those art objects;

(c) what is the number of the stolen/missing art objects which have since been recovered;

(d) whether Government have examined the entire safety system of the precious art objects kept in the Museum to plug the loopholes, if any, if so, what are the details thereof: and

(e) whether there is any accountability for the stolen/missing art objects or damage caused due to negligence in their handling/preservation, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M. G. K. MENON): (a) No art objects have been found missing/stolen from the National Museum, Delhi during 1987, 1988 and 1989.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir. Security devices have been installed in all the Galleries housing art objects besides security of armed Guards round the Clock.

(e) Yes, Sir.

Denotification of Reserved Forest in Orissa

72. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Orissa Government have denotified a reserved forest in the entire Konark west block and the wild life sanctuary to favour certain hoteliers to set-up five star hotels in violation of the Conservation of Forest Act, 1980 and the Wild Life Protection Act of 1972 and without taking prior approval of the Central Government;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof stating the total area of the reserved forest denotified by the Orissa Government and the likely impact on the wildlife as a consequence of withdrawal of the sanctuary status of the area involved; and

(c) what is Government's reaction regarding environmental degradation in violation of the Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) The details are being collected from the State Government and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Import of Sugar through a NRI Company

73. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to import sugar;

(b) if so, what is the quantity, with value of sugar proposed to be imported and the manner in which sugar imports have been contracted;

(c) whether imports of sugar have been arranged/are being arranged through a NRI owned company which is unknown in the sugar trade; and

(d) if so, what is the total quantity with value of sugar proposed to be imported through the said NRI company and what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI NATHU RAM MIRDHA): (a) to (d) Import of sugar, if any, is decided taking into account the carry over stock, production during the season and the demand for internal consumption. The Government has recently imported 2.42 lakh tonnes of sugar during 1989, at CIF value of US $ 12.57 crores. To bridge the gap in availability and demand for internal consumption, above imports of sugar were arranged by floating tenders. All the six parties with whom above quantity of 2.42 lakh tonnes of sugar was imported, are registered with State Trading Corporation of India as suppliers of sugar.

Reduction and By-Passing of the Recommendations of the U.P.S.C.

74. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what were the objectives in the setting up of the Union Public Service Commission in the Country;

(b) whether, of late, the cases of rejection/by-passing of the recommendations made by the U.P.S.C. have been on the increase;